VZCZCXRO7106 RR RUEHDBU RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHNP RUEHROV RUEHSL DE RUEHBS #1580/01 3281400 ZNY SSSSS ZZH R 241400Z NOV 09 FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9730 INFO RUBHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

Tuesday, 24 November 2009, 14:00 S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 BRUSSELS 001580 SIPDIS STATE FOR THE SECRETARY, EUR/WE, ISN, S/GC, AND AF/C TAGS PREL, PGOV, MARR, ECON, BE, AF
SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR BILATERAL MEETINGS WITH BELGIAN

DEDUCT: SLENDSLITER FOR BILATERAL MEETINGS WITH BELGIAN
LEADERS DURING THE SECRETARY'S DECEMBER 3.4 VISIT TO BRUSSELS
REF: A. BRUSSELS 1498 B. BRUSSELS 1493 C. BRUSSELS 1552
Classified By: Ambassador Howard Gutman, reason 1.4(b) and (d).
11. (C) Summary: Madame Secretary, Embassy Brussels welcomes your visit to Brussels on December 3-4 and your meetings with the in-coming Belgia
TAKING A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN EUROPE

12. (C) For the past few months, Embassy Brussels has been working to set the stage for a change in Belgium's self-concept as a small, meek country UP IN AFGHANISTAN

13. (C) Nevertheless, the new Defense Minister, Pieter De Crem, with sometimes grudging support from Leterme and others in the cabinet, reorier 14. (C) On the other hand, Belgium's contribuQions to civilian development in Afghanistan have not kept pace. In April 2009, the GOB announced SPURRING ON CLOSURE OF GUANTANAMO

15. (C) The Embassy has been encouraging Belgium to take a leadership role in Europe in the closure of the Guantanamo detention center. In Octo POLITICAL PITFALLS IN REGIONAL TENSIONS

16. (C) With three regions, three linguistic communities, seven parliaments and a myriad of political parties, domestic politics and the divisi INTEREST IN ENHANCED AFRICA COOPERATION

17. (C) Central Africa is a special interest of Belgium, as the former colonial power in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda and BRUSSELS 00001580 002 OF 003
14. (C) On the other hand, Belgium's contributions to civilian development in Afghanistan have not kept pace. In April 2009, the GOB announced SPURRING ON CLOSURE OF GUANTANAMO

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foreign minister, Karel De Gucht, last February, you discussed naming a bilateral task force to meet in Washington to discuss security sector r MULTILATERAL APPROACH TO EUROPEAN DISARMAMENT

18. (S) Belgium has a special interest in nuclear non-proliferation issues because it participates in NATO's nuclear forces at the Kleine Broge IRAN SANCTIONS IF NECESSARY

19. (C) Belgium shares our concern about Iranian efforts to develop a nuclear capability. It supports strengthened sanctions in the EU and UN i FORMER FM LOUIS MICHEL'S CANDIDACY FOR UNGA PRESIDENT

110. (C) One issue the Prime Minister or Foreign Minister may raise is a request for support for the candidacy of former Belgian Foreign Minist